



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Indian Canyon Roadside Clearance		
PROJECT LOCATION	Indian Canyon (Near intersection of Grass Valley and Cienega Roads); ~5 miles south of Hollister, CA	COUNTY	San Benito
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	CAL FIRE's San Benito-Monterey Unit Headquarters		
ADDRESS	2221 Garden Road, Monterey, CA 93940	PHONE	(831) 333-2600

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will reduce fuel loading along the access road to Indian Canyon, a property used by native cultures from around the world for ceremonial purposes. The project is approximately five miles due south of Hollister, CA, near the intersection of Grass Valley Road and Cienega Road. The project will reduce woody vegetation less than 12" DBH within 10 feet of a road. Vegetation will be reduced by approximately 60% within 100 feet of a road. Dead, diseased, and dying trees that may impact a road or structure will be removed. All remaining trees near a road will be pruned up to 16 feet or 50% of the live crown (whichever is less) within 100 feet of a road. This will open emergency ingress/egress in the event of an emergency as well as create defensible space for potential fires. Vegetation will also be reduced along an existing fuel break on the ridgelines surrounding the property to the east, south, and west. The vegetation will be reduced by hand crews using chainsaws; the resulting material shall be chipped and used as mulch on the property. No equipment will leave the existing road prism.

EXEMPTION STATUS

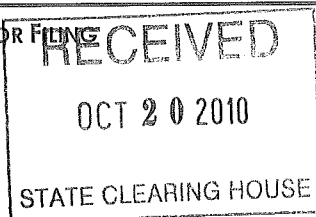
- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 1, 4 §15301 Existing Facilities, §15304 Minor Alterations to Land
☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))


REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits under portions of Class 1 and Class 4 Categorical Exemptions described in the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15301, 15304) pertaining to existing structures and minor alterations to land, will not have a significant effect on the environment, and is exempt from the provisions of CEQA. Prior to reaching this conclusion, however, the Department first conducted limited environmental review to confirm that no **Exceptions** exist at the project site which would preclude the use of a Categorical Exemption. The possible exceptions that lead agencies must consider include (a) sensitive location, (b) cumulative impact, (c) significant impact due to unusual circumstances, (d) impacts to scenic highways, (e) activities within a hazardous waste site, and (f) significant adverse change to the significance of a historical resource (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2). This project involves reducing fuel loading on private and BIA property which are hazards to the emergency ingress/egress, and which will have no appreciable impact on the water or the land.

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE's San Benito-Monterey Unit Headquarters.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING




William E. Snyder, Deputy Director Date 10/20/10
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection